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STUDY OF AN OLD GARDEN, No. 488—
JEROME THOMPSON.

If this is study, what must the artist's sketches be? It is a beautiful subject, but badly drawn and carelessly painted. What a picture Mr. Hill would have made of these rhododendrons, and cabbages, and leaves, and vines! It is presuming pretty largely on the ignorance of the public to call such careless work "study." Mr. Thompson will find to his sorrow that the public know more about roses, and cabbages, and garden-vines than he gives them credit for. This being the character of his studies, it is no longer surprising that he paints such pictures as the "Home in the West," "Indian Maiden's Toilet," &c., &c. And yet, this little picture, poor as it would look by the side of one of Hill's studies, is much better than anything we ever saw from Mr. Thompson's hand before. It is really a very pretty subject. Was it drawn from nature? It must have been, we think. If it were, we are disposed to rate the artist soundly for not taking more time to make his picture as perfect as he could. The very choice of such a subject shows taste, and even the coarse execution does not prevent our hoping that Mr. Thompson will not persist in destroying the value of another such a one by work without due thought and worthy care.

ADIRONDACK MOUNTAINS, No. 566—
HOMER D. MARTIN.

There are many bad pictures in this exhibition, some quite unaccountably bad, but few that are quite so null and negative as this. Indeed, it is difficult to recall any canvas covered with such a thickness of dirty paint, and absolutely without form and void. Doubtless it will be said that this is a very sweeping assertion. We are sorry we cannot make it otherwise. "You cannot extract blood from a stone," says the old proverb, nor can you compare chaos with

nature and point out the measure of conformity; and yet, strange as it may seem, this artist has shown signs of life, almost of earnestness. In last year's exhibition there was a study of the "Peaks of Madison and Adams from Randolph Hill," in which the distinct individuality of the two peaks was clearly and well given, and the snow—for they were covered with the first autumn snow—delicately drawn, and with the exception of the bad color, looking just like the mountains under that effect. Alas, how many young men there are who mean to be true, who make every spring fresh resolutions to work hard and to paint nature as she is; but, when they find themselves in the country, the temptation to sketch a little in the old careless manner, and spend the rest of the time with their friends, enjoying themselves, or going on delightful excursions with the ladies, is so strong that they want the moral courage to resist it, and so the summer slips away, and with it the good resolutions, and the artist finds himself in his studio without material enough to make a single good work. But pictures must be made, otherwise he cannot live, so the old conventional methods are resorted to, the pictures are made, and here is one of the results. So the years go by, and the man grows old with his good resolutions, sinking every year deeper into falseness and mannerism, and there is never any improvement or progress to be noticed in his work. But these men know, in the depths of their own hearts, that what they do is not true, is not like nature, and that they might have done, and would have done much better, if it had not been such hard work. This is the greatest obstacle in the way. If good pictures could be painted in the same space of time, and with the same *dilettante* sort of study, ah, how many would be doing the truth! But it requires a great deal of resolution and

patience to sit out in the burning July sun from six or seven in the morning until six or seven in the evening, using every minute of time, and letting nothing escape, working as hard as you possibly can. This is not pleasant. This is not easy; and we have all been brought up to understand that an artist's life is, first, genteel, second, easy. An artist can be a gentleman, can make money if he pleases the public, and, most delightful of all, can live without work. This has been for years the common belief; but this is not the fact, and, thank God! every day makes it less and less possible for artists to live without work, and make pictures without hard and long and patient study of nature. Art, to be of any service in the world, *must* faithfully represent *nature*, otherwise a picture is not a whit better than a polished mahogany bureau or washstand; nay, it is worse; the furniture is honest and has a use, while the picture is a cheat and humbug, pretending to be what it is not, and is perfectly useless except to degrade the taste and corrupt the feelings of every honest person who looks upon it.

STUDY BY A BROOK, No. 184, SHELBURNE MEADOWS, No. 139—R. J. PATTISON.

Welcome, Mr. Pattison, to the Exhibition! Thrice welcome your two earnest little pictures. Here is another man who believes in hard work; who, although an artist, seems to have accepted the inexorable and wise laws of Providence, by which it is arranged that man shall obtain nothing good or great without hard striving and earnest effort. We have seen in Bierstadt, in Gignoux, and others, the results of the old, idle system; now let us see the result of hard work. Here is Shelburne Meadows, with the ever beautiful, always cold and clear Androscoggin river running through it, all painted on the spot. Look at this lovely river: how clear, and

transparent, and deep it looks, with every bush, and weed, and little shadow perfectly reflected in it, just as well drawn and complete in form as the bank itself, only a little darker. Then, examine this beautiful flat meadow, with all its variety of color and bright sunlight, and the distant blue Bethel hills, known and loved by so many. Truly, it is inspiration to look at it, almost as good as a visit into the country. This picture is a better criticism upon the large and false landscapes in the exhibition than anything that will or can be written. To all who wish to learn to tell the true from the false, we say study this picture, study Mr. Moore's picture of the Catskill Valley. An hour given to the study of these, will give more lasting satisfaction and more knowledge, than a day given to the others. A few more such pictures will soon lead the public to discriminate between right and wrong, to see the poverty and barrenness of the old school, and the simple beauty and truthfulness of the new. The sky of this picture, although very good in light and color, is rather heavy and painty. Some of the nearest foreground bushes are rather hard and metallic, but these are very small faults, that time and close study will remedy. "The Study by a Brook," although it shows the same hard striving and close study, is not quite as successful as the other picture. Some parts of this are excellently painted; for instance, the evergreen vines and grasses on the right, and some of the leaves on the left; but there is a want of the grace and softness of nature; all the leaves are too hard, and look as though they were cut out of tin. It is a very natural shortcoming, and is a fault in the right direction. Still, Mr. Pattison ought to determine at once that his pictures shall be entirely free from such faults in future. It rests entirely with himself. In every leaf in nature, even against a dark hole, as in this study,